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MRS GILL'S NARRATIVE.

FOR more than two hundred years, the astronomers of Europe have been making laborious and costly attempts to discover the exact distance of the earth from the sun. To this hour they have not succeeded. Some have made out the distance to be ninety-six millions of miles, some ninety-three, others ninety-two millions, and some from ninety-one and a half to ninety-two millions, or thereabouts. There is still no certainty.

The enthusiasm with which this scientific question has been pursued is quite extraordinary. While the world generally are thinking of ordinary affairs, and do not care much else about the sun than that he should shine to dispel bad weather and ripen the crops in due season, there is a body of eager astronomers who keep on making attempts to settle once for all the precise distance between our globe and the grand luminary. Latterly, these persistent inquirers have been materially assisted by newly invented instruments of the telescope order, particularly one instrument called the heliometer. The way they go to work is to set up an observatory on some prominent place where there is a likelihood of clear skies, and thence making observations in relation to one or other of the planets and the sun. The transit of Venus across the sun's disc in 1874 was seized on as a good opportunity of making the required discovery; and astronomers with their instruments went to different parts of the earth in order to see the phenomenon at various angles, and calculate accordingly. Still, with all the pains taken, the result was not satisfactory, for Venus has a dense atmosphere, which tends to obscure the planet when entering on its passage across the face of the sun. This was disappointing. The next good chance to be seized on was the position of Mars in relation to the sun in September 1877. At that time Mars would be in 'opposition,' that is to say nearly in a straight line with the earth and the sun—the earth being between. As no better opportunity could occur with Mars during the present century, it was

embraced by Mr David Gill, an astronomer who had accompanied Lord Lyndsay to Mauritius in 1874, to assist in making observations on the transit of Venus, and was now to be favoured with the use of his lordship's heliometer. Mr Gill was further fortunate in possessing the confidence of the Royal Astronomical Society, which guaranteed five hundred pounds to enable him to incur the outlay on an expedition to the island of Ascension, where Mars, it was believed, could be seen to the greatest advantage. There was a certain novelty in the proposed operations. Instead of the ordinary plan of taking observations from two remotely situated parts, Mr Gill undertook to combine in himself two sets of observers. His process consisted simply in observing Mars in the evening when it was rising, and again in the morning when it was setting, betwixt which times the rotation of the earth had transported him six or seven thousand miles. The idea was not original, but it was now for the first time to be put in practice by the aid of the heliometer.

From Dartmouth on the south coast of England, Mr Gill proceeded on his expedition in the beautiful new steamer, *Balmoral Castle*, on the 14th June. Including his astronomical equipments, he had twenty tons of luggage, and was accompanied by Mrs Gill, an accomplished young Scotchwoman, who has written a lively account of her own and her husband's adventures, which has just been published in the form of a handy volume, 'Six Months in Ascension' (Murray). The *Balmoral Castle* was one of Donald Currie's Line, bound for the Cape of Good Hope. Like other outward-bound mail-vessels, it went straight to St Helena, whence it was possible to reach Ascension only by a vessel on the return voyage. This inferred going back eight hundred miles, but there was no help for it.

Ascension is a strange kind of island, lying in the middle of the Atlantic, about eight degrees south of the equator. It received its name from the circumstance of being discovered by the Portuguese on Ascension-day, 1501. Though possessing

an area of five-and-thirty square miles, and with a fine climate, it is so worthless, that for more than three hundred years no nation would appropriate it as a settlement. It remained uninhabited until 1815, when in connection with Napoleon Bonaparte's detention at St Helena, it was taken possession of by the English, who still retain it, but only as a military or naval post, under the administration of the Admiralty. It has no general population, nor could it support any. The island is the relic of a volcano, or group of volcanoes, and for the most part consists of the species of dry rubbish which is shot out at the door of an iron-foundry. It has no rivers or streams, and no roads. With insignificant exceptions, the whole of it is a wild desert unfit to support man or beast. It is valuable chiefly as a place to touch at or as a coaling-station for vessels, and now less so than it used to be before the opening of the Suez Canal.

Passing Madeira and the Canary Islands, the *Balmoral Castle* had a pleasant run to St Helena. Here the Gills had to stay a week, during which time they made several interesting excursions; for though of volcanic origin, St Helena happens to have stretches of good soil, subject to cultivation, along with some picturesque scenery. At length Mr Gill and his wife were taken off by the *Edinburgh Castle* steamer, which in three days brought them to anchor in Clarence Bay, Ascension. The 'Abomination of Desolation,' says Mrs Gill, 'seemed to be before our eyes as we looked eagerly at the land. A few scattered buildings lay among reddish-brown cinders near the shore—a sugar-loaf hill of the same colour rose up behind and closed the view. . . . Stones, stones, everywhere stones, that have been tried in the fire, and are now heaped about in dire confusion, or beaten into dust which we see dancing in pillars before the wind. Dust, sunshine, and cinders, and low yellow houses frizzling in it all.' There was much difficulty in landing, on account of the double rollers, such being the name given to gigantic rolling waves, which come no one knows whence if it be not from the south pole. A landing was happily effected without risk from the sharks, which are hovering about for a prey; and arriving among a group of officers, the party found Captain Phillimore, the naval officer in command, waiting to welcome them. By the lulling down of the rollers, the heavy luggage was fortunately got ashore without injury, and removed to Commodore Cottage, at the top of a rising ground that had been prepared for the reception of the visitors.

The little port where the landing took place, on the west side of the island, is dignified on maps with the name of George-town. Locally, it is known as Garrison; for it is little else, being a cluster of dwellings and stores for the officers and men on duty, along with a small colony of Negro Kroomen, imported from the coast of Africa to do what is called 'low-caste work.' Commodore Cottage was a sort of offshoot of Garrison, situated aloft among cinders; but possessing a croquet-lawn laid with cement, on which the astronomical apparatus was set up. The house consisted of two or three rooms, with a kitchen or 'galley,' situated apart, to avoid the heat of the cooking-fire. Mrs Gill did not find fault with the accommodation. The matter for serious consider-

ation was how to obtain service and supplies in such a wilderness. As for service, she was furnished with an invalided wardroom cook, named Hill; besides whom she procured another manservant named Sam, and a Krooman to do the heavier work. Accompanied by Hill, she set off on a voyage of discovery respecting provisions—not a very pleasing excursion, for the hot cinders burned through her thin boots.

It was only now that the truth dawned upon her. Garrison was not a town with shops at which articles can be purchased. Practically, the island was a war-vessel subject to all the rules of the service. Rations of a certain description would periodically be served out to all on board. There was no butcher, no dairy, no green-grocer, no fishmonger, no baker to sell bread as wanted. There was only the 'Royal Naval Canteen,' that was to supply all wants, but which was 'more full of flies than anything else.' Very provoking this for a housewife anxious to keep things right. She goes to the establishment of the official and only baker. "Can I have some bread?" I asked boldly, thinking there could be no difficulty here. "All served out for the night, ma'am." "O dear! And when do you bake more?" "The day after to-morrow!" and my heart sinking; when the good-natured fellow added: "But I can make you a loaf now, if you like." Then I revived. . . . Now about milk. I was told, a mule brings that down every morning from Green Mountain, when there is any. A bell rings at seven o'clock, and everybody runs for a gill, except when there are many sick in hospital, and then they get it all! This was lively! And vegetables. There are only sweet potatoes to be had, and none will be served out until next Friday.' Next there was some inquiry regarding a butcher. Hill answers: 'There ain't any butcher. One of the marines kills sheep twice a week, and on Saturdays a bullock, which is rationed out so much to each man; and our rations are very small just now, for the sheep and bullocks are starving for food and water. Hardly any are killed that have not fainted first.' Mrs Gill thought she should faint too. But she did not. Resolutely bearing up against the oddity of the occasion, provisions were procured for present wants; and being put upon the rations of a married officer, there was ultimately little to complain of. The greatest privation was the scarcity of fresh water. Of this necessary of life each member of Garrison was for a time limited to a gallon a day, and that consisted chiefly of condensed sea-water, which was far from palatable.

David, as Mrs Gill always lovingly calls her husband, had his own troubles. The observatory was in working order. All was ready for a look at Mars; but the planet was provokingly shrouded in a long streak of cloud every night, and no observation could be made. Two or three weary weeks were passed, and unless the observatory was shifted to a distance beyond the cloud nothing seemingly could be done. There now occurs a fine act of feminine heroism. Mrs Gill determined to set forth on an excursion at night to discover if possible a spot at which Mars was visible. In this dreary night-journey her only apprehension was the possibility of an encounter with one of the many wild-cats which infest the island. Accompanied by Hill, the cook, she started at

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ten o'clock with no other light than a bull's-eye lantern. Travelling in a south-easterly direction across the clinkers, her feet ached with the small stones that kept getting into her shoes. Holding on bravely, she finally arrived at a spot which she felt convinced would be beyond the intervention of the cloud. This was hopeful news. On the 1st of August the apparatus at Commodore Cottage was dismantled, and with enormous labour the whole was transferred and set up on a southern height overlooking Mars Bay. As for domestic accommodation, it was in tents on a primitive scale. How the poor woman endured the fatigue of removal and the subsequent privations, can only be understood by those who know what a wife enthusiastic in helping to bear her husband's burdens will cheerfully suffer. We must refer to the book for a hundred particulars which we have not space to notice.

For a time there was still an odious nightly cloud. At last, on the evening of the 5th September, just when Mars was in full opposition, the sky cleared, and the planet shone forth in all his ruddy splendour. David set to work, and made excellent observations. With highly wrought feelings, Mrs Gill could not go to bed, but sat outside on the clinkers until morning. She says: 'Happier hours I never spent than those early morning ones under this beautiful heaven. The night was unusually still, and outside the observatory there was not a sound save the gentle flapping of the tents—like the wings of passing birds—and the continual murmur of greeting from the waves as they met the shore. Time passed unconsciously, for I was giving my imagination full play; and when I heard the observatory dome shut, I could hardly believe that I had been dreaming on a rock for three hours. The awakening was as pleasant as the dream had been. David was radiant, and no wonder! All our previous disappointment, fatigue, and anxiety were forgotten in the good fortune of the night, and now we might rest.' After this, there was a week of lovely evenings and mornings, and fresh observations rewarded the industry of the astronomer. The object in view was accomplished.

The monotony of life at the observatory was relieved by walks along the sea-shore, picturesquely lined with volcanic rocks, in which the fierce waves had cut passages and left pools in which millions of shell-fish disported themselves. Mrs Gill relates an adventure on one of these occasions. 'While poking at a lovely pink coral-line in one of these grottos, trying to dislodge it, I felt my stick suddenly pulled from my grasp. Thinking it must have got fixed among the stones in some way, I was about to put down my hand to disengage it, when, to my horror, I saw some ugly slimy tentacles wind themselves round my trusty staff, which was now the prey of a cuttle-fish. There was not the slightest occasion for it of course; nevertheless I screamed. This was no devil-fish of Victor Hugo dimensions; but so hideous was the creature, that disgust, not terror possessed me. David, who was at a little distance exploring on his own account, concluded that I had at least sprained my ankle, and ran quickly to my assistance. "Only an octopus! We have seen many of these before." "Yes; but only baby ones, who looked innocent enough to be gorged with crabs; this is a monster, a fiend!"

We stood watching him. Clearly my stick was not to his liking, for by-and-by he gradually unwound himself from it, and sank sullenly down among the coral, looking as before, like a tuft of harmless sea-weed. How I congratulated myself on not having trusted my hand under water.' It was a fortunate escape.

Before quitting Ascension, Mr and Mrs Gill made some excursions. One of these was to Green Mountain, a spot on its lofty summit being the only place in the island where there are flowers, two or three trees, and a patch of green grass. Here there are several cottages with a few cows which give milk for an adjoining hospital. On the side of the hill there are some patches of cultivated ground, surrounded by a brushwood of aloes, guavas, Cape gooseberry, and mulberry trees. The growth of English potatoes and cabbages was attempted. The prevalent want of water is the great drawback. Heavy showers of rain fall over the island, but the water sinks and disappears among the clinkers and ashes, and only on rare occasions do torrents pour down from the mountains. To supply Garrison with water, wells have been sunk in the interior of the island. From these tanks are filled, and the water is led away by iron pipes for domestic use. The supply, however, is insufficient, and condensed sea-water is often the only resource. Evidently, something remains to be done. There can be little doubt that by a method of collecting water in tanks, as at Bermuda, there might be a system of irrigation and culture. Perhaps the heavy cost prevents any extended undertaking of this nature. With all its terrible drought, the island is not destitute of animal life. Besides the wild-cats already alluded to, there are wild-goats, which scramble about the rocks, subsisting on ferns and blades of grass which spring up in crevices which have retained a few drops of rain. There are likewise some wild asses, which are caught and made use of. The island has numerous birds, the eggs of which are exported in large quantities. The great export, however, is turtles of a superior kind, which are kept in sea-water tanks on the shore.

Having made all the astronomical observations required at Mars Bay, Mr Gill returned to Commodore Cottage, where he made his last observation on the 8th January 1878. Things were now packed up to be ready for the mail-steamer for England, which was immediately expected. 'Wednesday, 9th,' writes Mrs Gill, 'No steamer, and we begin to wonder whether Ascension has been forgotten! Thursday morning—still waiting; but while I was sitting quietly with my needlework at 4 p.m., the white flag and ball were suddenly hoisted on Cross Hill; mail in sight. My needle was left half undrawn, and all at once I felt in a bustle, without exactly knowing why, for we had been ready a long while. Within an hour of signalling, the *Warwick Castle* anchored in Clarence Bay.' In the evening, Mr and Mrs Gill embarked with their mass of luggage, and were speedily on their way home. After a pleasant voyage, they arrived in England on the 24th January.

What about the sun's distance from the earth, as judged by observations of Mars? Mr Gill says he is still busy with his calculations, and some months must elapse before the final result can

be deduced. Alluding to what other astronomers had at the same time been doing, he thinks it likely that the united observations will prove that the sun's distance will be nearer to ninety-three than to ninety-two millions of miles.

We have just to say a word in conclusion; it is to thank Mrs Gill for her exceedingly entertaining work, which we recommend to general notice. With a few faults in style, as might be expected from what we presume to be a first attempt in authorcraft, the book does her much credit, and we hail her as a welcome accession to the list of lady-writers of England. W. C.

HAROLD RIVERS.

IN EIGHT CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER V.

HAROLD RIVERS contrived to reach his bedroom without being seen by any one belonging to the hotel. After changing his clothes, he went downstairs again, and lighting a cigar, he joined some other smokers on the lawn. There he was doomed to hear his adventure canvassed by half-a-dozen different speakers, none of whose faces he could see. Every one praised the unknown hero's bravery, and every one wondered why he had disappeared so mysteriously. The general opinion seemed to be that he would turn up on the morrow, with the view either of being rewarded for his heroism or of having it proclaimed on the house-tops—in other words, of having it duly eulogised in the newspapers.

Next morning Harold went back to London. He would wait a week or two till the excitement caused by his last night's adventure had subsided, and then he would go back to Sandport. But it was not till the end of two months that he saw Sandport again. His sudden ducking gave him what the doctors called 'a chill,' and that in turn developed into a kind of low fever, which stole away his appetite and wasted his strength and laid him by the heels for several weeks. When he got back to his rooms at Sandport, neither the landlord nor the waiters recognised him again. He looked like the skeleton of his former self.

To Emilia meanwhile, this was a period of utter wretchedness. Her first great fear had been that her child was lost to her for ever. But when this fear was dispelled, and Daisy lay sleeping as calmly on her bosom as though no accident had ever befallen her, her thoughts flew at once to her husband. Next day and the day after that, she never stirred out of doors, hoping, dreading, expecting every minute that he would call. After that she gave up hoping, and tried to persuade herself that she had never hoped at all. Had she not banished him from her presence of her own accord? Had she not forbidden him ever to approach her again? He was only fulfilling her own behests. Her landlady brought her the gossip of the little town. Everybody wondered, nobody seemed to know, who the mysterious stranger could possibly be. An unknown atom, he had stepped out of the crowd on hearing that cry of distress; he had done his deed, and had disappeared without a word to any one. But Emilia kept her own counsel, and professed to know no more than her neighbours; only in Daisy's prayers a little extra petition was inserted:

'Pray God bless dear Mr Wivers, and make him a happy man.' Daisy wanted to say 'a happy gentleman,' and thought it was hardly treating Harold with proper respect to call him nothing better than a 'man.'

Sometimes Emilia thought that she would write to Harold and summon him to her side. She began a score of letters at different times, but never finished one of them. Truth to tell, her moods varied a dozen times a day. Do what she might, and cherish though she did a sweet and tender recollection of the dead, her heart still yearned towards that living love to which she had vowed herself, and which even now was waiting with open arms to receive her. In her estimate of the two men, of her dead husband and her living one, when she came to weigh them in her thoughts one against the other, she could not help acknowledging to herself how superior in every way, in education, in accomplishments, in all that constitutes true manhood, was Harold Rivers to George Warrener. But round the memory of her first love there still clung a halo of romance; and then the terrible way in which she had been bereft of him lent an added tenderness to her recollections. Above all, it was impossible to forget that one man had met with his death at the hands of the other. Knowing what she knew of Harold Rivers, how was it possible that she could ever live with him as his wife, ever sleep by his side? Waking suddenly in the dumb watches of the night, might she not well look to see the ghostly face of her dead love bent over her in terrible reproach. And yet with all this, her heart went out towards the man whom she had bidden never to come into her presence again.

By-and-by, in some occult way which she herself could not have explained, she became aware that Harold was near her again. She never met him face to face; she never passed him when she was out walking, and yet she felt that he was close at hand. Sometimes she thought she recognised his figure in the distance, but so indistinctly that she could not make sure it was he. She felt his influence upon her, as we feel the influence of spring before the flowers have yet budded. It was like the influence of spring in that it was sweet and subtle, full of vague languors and delicious pains, and yet with that glad restlessness which comes alike to birds and trees and flowers when winter's reign is nearly ended.

Emilia as a rule did not care to associate with any of the other visitors who had apartments in the same house as herself; but this autumn brought a certain Mrs Imray, whom few people could help liking, and with whom she soon struck up a pleasant acquaintanceship. Truth to tell, Emilia felt herself to be rusting for want of a little congenial society. The link that first brought the two women together was their children. Each of them had a little daughter. The two girls became bosom-friends—which meant kissing and quarrelling and making it up again half-a-dozen times a day. The two mammas soon got into conversation, and by the end of a week each had contracted a sincere liking for the other.

Mrs Imray was the wife of a gentleman who was junior partner in a certain London firm. Mr Imray's business engagements took him abroad

for three months every summer. During these enforced absences of her husband, Mrs Imray generally took up her abode at some unpretentious watering-place; hence the reason of her present residence in Sandport.

The two women walked and read and did their fancy-work together, and interchanged ideas on a hundred different topics. One pleasant morning as they sat together on the beach, pretending to be hard at work, but in reality seeing everything that was going on around them, and always keeping half an eye on the children, busy with their spades and buckets no great distance away, the conversation fell on shipwrecks and the loss of life at sea.

'I often wish,' said Mrs Imray with a sigh, 'that Harry's absences from home did not involve such long journeys by water. Twice he has been in the greatest danger of his life; once by shipwreck, and once by the burning of the ship in which he was a passenger.'

'In danger of his life from shipwreck!' said Emilia with aroused interest. 'Do please tell me about it, dear Mrs Imray.'

'There is very little to tell,' said Mrs Imray quietly, as she proceeded to re-thread her needle. 'It happened between four and five years ago, on a voyage from Bristol to Halifax, Nova Scotia.'

'From Bristol to Halifax?' cried Emilia, laying a hand that trembled with excitement on her companion's arm. 'Do you happen to remember the name of the vessel?'

'Very well indeed. The ship was called the *Daphne*.'

'The same, the very same!' exclaimed Emilia, with clasped hands and blanched face.

'Did you then happen to know any one who was wrecked on board the *Daphne*?' asked Mrs Imray, turning with some wonder to her companion.

'Yes; I knew one gentleman, like your husband, a passenger.'

'What was his name?'

'He was shot in some sort of a brawl soon after the ship had sprung a leak,' answered Emilia, without heeding Mrs Imray's question.

'I have often heard my husband speak about it. His name was Hernshaw; was it not?'

'Yes; Hernshaw, George Hernshaw; I knew him slightly; but his mother and sister I knew very well.'

'Poor creatures! What an excessively painful thing for them.'

'Painful indeed,' exclaimed Emilia. 'But I don't think they were ever told the whole facts of the affair; and as you and I have met so singularly, I feel sure that it would be a great comfort if I could write them a full and accurate account of how George came by his death.' She spoke with an evident amount of hesitation. She never looked at her companion, but seemed to be watching a faint trail of smoke from a distant steamer.

Mrs Imray paused a little before she replied, as though she were making up her mind what to say.

'As you say, it is indeed singular that you and I, meeting here as strangers, should find a common link of interest in such an out-of-the-way event as the wreck of the *Daphne*. Of course my interest in the wreck is confined to Mr Imray's share in it, and to thankfulness for his escape, although I have often heard my

husband speak of young Hernshaw's death. But did I understand you, Mrs Warrener, to say that the poor young man's mother and sister had never been told the full particulars of his fate?'

'They had an account of course from the owners of the ship, but it seemed to be little more than a bare outline. They have never been told the full details from that day to this.'

Again Mrs Imray paused before speaking. Then she said: 'In this life it is not always judicious or advisable to say all that we may happen to know. Is it not possible that the owners of the *Daphne* may have been exercising a wise discretion in keeping back some of the details from your friends?'

'Dear Mrs Imray, what do you mean?' asked Emilia, with feverish eagerness of voice and manner. 'What could there possibly be to keep back? The story as I heard it seemed to be one of tragic simplicity.'

'I don't say that anything was kept back; I only say there may have been.'

'You know more of the story than I do. You evidently think that there were certain circumstances which it was advisable that George's friends should not be made acquainted with. But in any case you will not object to tell me the story as it was told to you. I am neither Mr Hernshaw's mother nor his sister.'

'Really, my dear Mrs Warrener, my recollection of the details of the shipwreck, except in so far as they affected my husband, is most vague and unsatisfactory. I feel sure that I could not trust myself to give you a correct version of all that happened.'

'Of course if you cannot, you cannot,' said Emilia a little coldly. Then she said to herself: 'There has been something kept back from me. If I cannot persuade Mrs Imray to tell me what I want to know, I will go to the owners of the *Daphne* and demand the full details from them.'

'Listen,' at length said Mrs Imray, taking one of Emilia's hands in both hers. 'I can see that you are deeply interested in this matter. Such being the case, I tell you what I will do. Harry will be home in about a fortnight from now. He will come down here to fetch me. I will introduce you to each other, and tell him that you want to hear from his lips all the particulars of the wreck of the *Daphne*, more especially that portion which relates to the fate of young Hernshaw. I do not doubt that he will tell you everything. After that it will be for you to decide whether it will be wise or unwise to tell the young man's mother and sister more than they know already.'

With this Emilia was fain to content herself. At last she was about to hear the story of the shipwreck and of her husband's death. At last she should be able to judge whether Harold Rivers's assertion that he was no murderer was the truth or not the truth. The full name of Emilia's first husband had been George Hernshaw Warrener. When the owners of the *Daphne* had first communicated with his mother respecting his death, they had informed her that he had entered his name on the list of passengers as George Hernshaw only, and that it was only from certain papers found in his pockets after death that they had discovered his real name and the address of his relatives. Emilia had often puzzled herself

with wondering what could have been George's motive for not entering his full name on the ship's books. Sometimes she thought the mistake must have arisen through an oversight on the part of the shipping people. At other times she set it down as a practical joke or the result of a bet on the part of her husband. George had always been addicted to practical jokes and to wagering with his friends on all kinds of outrageous matters. Now however, it began to dawn upon her that her husband's change of name might possibly be connected with this other mystery, of which as yet she knew next to nothing.

CHAPTER VI.

Never had Emilia passed a more anxious and heart-wearing time than during the fortnight which intervened before the coming of Mr Imray. When he did arrive, he proved to be a cheerful and genial man of the world—a man who was fond of a good dinner, a glass of good wine or grog, and a good cigar—a man who despised sentiment; a fact of which his wife was thoroughly aware. When Mr Imray was at home, Mrs Imray always looked carefully after the cooking, and the result was domestic peace.

Mr Imray took to Mrs Warrener at first sight. 'She has got the most magnificent eyes I ever saw,' he averred to his wife after Emilia had taken her leave.

Mr Imray smiled, and agreed with him—or rather professed to do so; in her heart she probably thought that her own eyes were quite as fine as her friend's; but she never contradicted her husband about such trifles.

'Why don't she get married again?' continued Mr Imray. 'She's far too good-looking to bury herself alive in this poky little place.'

Mrs Imray might have retorted that her husband had thought the poky little place quite good enough for her while he was away; but she only said: 'I often tell her that she ought to get out into the world more than she does.'

Then she told her husband what Mrs Warrener wanted him to do—to give her a full and complete narrative of all the circumstances connected with the death of young Hernshaw on board the *Daphne*. Unlike his wife, Mr Imray raised no difficulties in the matter; and when she gave him an account of what had passed between herself and Emilia, he pooh-poohed her scruples, and said the affair was no business of theirs, and that Mrs Warrener was quite welcome to hear all that he knew about it. It was accordingly arranged that the narrative should be given next evening after dinner.

Although the autumn was well advanced, the weather was still warm and fine; and with merely the addition of a light shawl thrown over their shoulders, the ladies could sit out on the lawn till a late hour, and there too Mr Imray could smoke his cigar without let or hindrance. But the days were growing so short that although Mr Imray's dinner-hour was an early one, it was dusk before he was ready to begin his narrative. After lighting a fresh cigar and taking an appreciative sip at his grog, Mr Imray began.

'The ship, as you ladies are already aware, was called the *Daphne*, and she was bound from Bristol to Halifax. We carried a general cargo, and about thirty first-class passengers. The weather began

to be dirty before we were fairly out of the Channel. For several days I saw little or nothing of my fellow-passengers. Shut up in their cabins, they were waited on by the steward and stewardess; but I being weather-proof, spent most of my time on deck, and rather enjoyed the fun. One of the first to shew his nose above deck was a certain Mr Harold Rivers, of whom we shall hear something later on. At such times folks do not stand greatly on ceremony, and Mr Rivers and I were soon on very good terms. He was a most agreeable fellow, a little stand-offish perhaps; but that might be because he was what is generally called a swell—that is to say, he only travelled about for his own pleasure, and hadn't to work for his bread-and-cheese as we poor hacks have to do. By-and-by more passengers began to crawl out of their dens and shew themselves on deck; and when the weather abated, the ladies, of whom we had a considerable number on board, appeared by ones and twos, and things began to look rather jolly. Among other passengers was your friend Mr George Hernshaw, a young fellow, as I remember him, with a remarkably pleasant smile and a remarkably pleasant way with the ladies. Quite a ladies' man was Mr Hernshaw, although he had a young wife with him on board; but she, poor creature, was ill the whole time, and was rarely seen beyond the precincts of the ladies' saloon.—Annette dear, I am afraid Mrs Warrener is ill.'

Mrs Imray was by her side in a moment. 'It is only a sudden faintness. I shall be better in a minute or two,' said Emilia. 'Thanks; yes, a little water.'

'Had I not better defer the rest of my story till another day?' asked Mr Imray.

'By no means. I am better now, and will promise not to be so foolish again. Did I understand you to say that Mr Hernshaw had a—a wife with him on board the *Daphne*?'

'Yes; and a sweet young thing she was, but very delicate, I should say. It was pretty well understood on board that they had been married only two or three days before the vessel sailed.'

'Ah!'

'You seem surprised. Perhaps it was a runaway wedding, and his people knew nothing about it.'

'Yes—I think, as you say, that it must have been a runaway wedding. But it cannot matter now.'

'In any case, there she was. All I know is that she wore a wedding-ring and went by the name of Mrs Hernshaw. Are you sure I had not better defer the rest till another day?'

'My dear Mr Imray, I am quite well now, and your story interests me deeply. Do, pray, go on.'

'Well, day passed after day, as they do at sea, without anything of moment to mark their flight. The weather was now as fine as it had formerly been rough, and there was every prospect of a pleasant ending to our voyage. But one day a whisper passed from ear to ear that the good ship *Daphne* had sprung a leak. Her timbers had been terribly strained in the late gale; there was a weak place somewhere, and before anybody seemed aware of it, there was a foot of water in the hold. However dismayed we might be in secret, we all strove to put a good face on the matter, and

to make-believe that there was nothing really amiss. The pumps were set to work; a lot of the cargo was thrown overboard, and various expedients were resorted to, to lighten the ship. But presently the water began to gain on us at an alarming rate; and although we contrived to keep the ladies in ignorance of the worst, it was evident to us men that a climax of some kind was at hand. Mr Rivers and I made a quiet examination of the boats, and found, to our dismay, that two out of the four were totally unseaworthy. The remaining two we calculated would with close packing hold rather more than half the people on board. What would be the fate of those who must necessarily be left behind, Providence alone could tell. "We must look first of all to the women and children," said Rivers. "It will be time enough to think of ourselves when they are safe;" and I quite agreed with him. He was a fine fellow, was Rivers—a re-markably fine fellow,' added Mr Imray parenthetically as he took another sip at his grog.

'Well, Rivers and I spoke to the first-mate, and he was quite of our way of thinking. Under cover of darkness, a quantity of biscuit, some water, a compass, and a few other things were put into the seaworthy boats.—I had forgotten to say that soon after leaving Bristol we discovered, to our surprise and disgust, that the captain of the *Daphne* was a confirmed drunkard. How he came to be intrusted with so responsible a post has ever been a mystery to me. Half his time was spent in his own cabin in company with a bottle of brandy, and when he did shew himself on deck he never seemed to be thoroughly sober. We all looked up to the first-mate as the virtual captain of the ship.

'Hour by hour our prospects grew more gloomy. At length the men refused to work the pumps any longer. If they were to be drowned, they said, they would die game; and with that, some half-dozen of them went below and broke into the spirit-room, and we saw them on deck no more. Fortunately, the weather continued fine, and most of us male passengers stayed on deck day and night, getting our meals as we could, so as to be ready for any sudden emergency. The climax came sooner than we expected. It was on a Wednesday morning, I remember, just after our rough breakfast, that the captain came staggering up the cabin stairs with trembling hands and eyes inflamed with drink. "Our time has come," he called out, so that all on deck could hear him. "The ship will go down in less than an hour. It's every man for himself now!"

'Instantly there was a rush made for the boats; but the first-mate must have foreseen what had just taken place, for he and Mr Rivers with four trustworthy sailors were already on guard against the davits of the larger boat—I forget whether they called it the jolly-boat or the long-boat—when the rush took place. There they stood, six determined-looking men, the five seamen with drawn cutlasses, and Rivers with a revolver. At sight of them the crowd fell back. "This boat is, first of all, for the ladies and children," called out Mr Rivers. "When they have all been brought here it will remain to be seen what room is left for others. But till they are in safety, no man except those told off to navigate her shall enter this boat except across my body.—Now then,

Taylor," he said to the mate, "will you go and bring up the ladies and children?"

'And what were you doing all the time Harry?' asked Mrs Imray, who had never heard the story so circumstantially told before.

'Happening to look in my case, I found there one last cigar, which I thought I might as well smoke, so as to save it from being spoiled by the salt-water.'

'Was there no thought of me dear, in your mind at such a time?'

'I believe I did rather regret not having bought you that maroon velvet dress that you plagued me so about before sailing.'

'That will do sir. You may go on with your narrative.'

'Well, about half the women and children had been stowed away in the boat, when young Hernshaw came pushing through the crowd. He had evidently been snatching an hour or two's sleep, and had not witnessed the scene on deck a few minutes previously. Seizing hold of a rope, he was about to swing himself into the boat, when Mr Rivers seized him by the collar. "Stand back sir; stand back!" he said; "this boat is for the ladies and children." "I shall not stand back!" cried Hernshaw, grasping Rivers in his turn by the collar. "Who gave you authority to order people about? The captain says it's every man for himself now, and my life's as dear to me as any one else's is to them." "Stand back sir, I say!" cried Rivers again. "You shall not enter this boat till the ladies and children are safe." "Won't I, though! We'll soon see about that." And with that he seized Rivers round the waist, and swung him away from his position near the boat. "I warn you again," said Rivers, "that if you try to enter that boat you are a dead man!" He knew that if one man were allowed to enter, others would inevitably follow, and in that case, all chance of saving the rest of the ladies and children would be gone for ever. Hernshaw hesitated a moment, and then he turned to some of the other passengers, who were gradually pressing inch by inch nearer the boat. "Are you men or cowards," he cried, "that you let this fellow's bluster frighten you? Are your lives dear to you, or are they not? If they are, follow me, and seize the one last chance of safety that is left you!" He stepped forward, and again grasped the rope he had laid hold of before. Three or four passengers were close at his heels. Others were ready to follow. In another half-minute the boat would have been carried by a rush. "Madman! your fate be on your own head!" cried Rivers, as with a bullet through his body George Hernshaw, without groan or cry of any kind, fell back dead. The other passengers shrank back like a flock of frightened sheep; and the women were saved.'

No one spoke for a little while. Emilia, sitting there in the starlight, was as silent and motionless as a statue. This then was the story she had so longed to hear!

Mr Imray shook the ash off his cigar and spoke again, but in a lower voice than before. "There was one dark feature about young Hernshaw's case which, as I have promised to tell Mrs Warrener everything, may as well be told now. When he rushed to the boat with the idea of

saving his life, he had left his young wife behind him in her cabin, and there she was found after he was dead. He had thought only of saving himself.'

Mrs Warrener rose suddenly. 'I think I hear Daisy crying. She is not well to-day. You will excuse me will you not?' she said. 'I—I must have some further talk with you to-morrow, Mr Imray,' and hardly waiting to say good-night, she hurried into the house. How she got up-stairs, she never knew; but when she reached her room, she locked the door and flung herself on her bed, and lay there till daylight in an agony of grief and shame and remorse.

THE LEMMING.

NATURALISTS have formed a strange theory regarding an animal called the lemming, which bears a resemblance to a large rat, and belongs to the same family of creatures. The lemming has never been naturalised in the British Islands. It has its home in Norway, and dwells in holes in the earth. All sorts of odd notions have been entertained and propagated concerning its habits. Olaf Magnus, a worthy but credulous writer, speaks of the sudden appearance of crowds of lemmings in a district, and inclines to the belief that they drop from the clouds, by way of satisfactory explanation of their abundance; whilst tales of the animals dropping into the laps of women sitting peaceably at their cottage-doors, and on the decks of ships at sea, are gravely related as true narratives by way of further illustration of the origin of the animals. Pennant, a later authority, tells us that the lemmings march in parallel lines three feet apart, that they swim boldly through lakes and rivers, and even eat their way through corn-stacks rather than deviate from the straight line of march—the latter explanation being however, a little less feasible than that which credits the lemming with a natural desire to obtain food on easy terms. Credulity again however, comes to the front when Pennant writes that the cattle perish through the infection of the ground and grass by these animals; and that the fear of man resides not in them, was evidently a theory of this naturalist, since he takes care to inform us that when a peasant falls in the line of march, 'they jump as high as his knees in defence of their progress,' and persist in their course, the human object notwithstanding. Our author approaches the rational once again, when he speaks of the devouring rearguard of foxes, wolves, lynxes, and birds of prey which follow the lemming-army, and cut off the stragglers by hundreds. He also emphasises, correctly enough, the devastation committed by these animals on the crops which may lie in their track. Sifting out opinions from facts, it may therefore be said that the lemmings are in the habit of making emigration-movements at irregular intervals; that they pursue a straight course, and may swim across rivers, lakes, or even be found in the sea itself; and lastly, that their progress appears to be invariably directed to the sea. In this latter remark will be found the clue to the causes of lemming-migration.

It is exactly this curious and apparently unsatisfactory termination to their journey which has not merely excited the interest of naturalists in the lemmings, but has in a large degree aided

the solution of the problem their migrations present. The period of the year at which the migrations of the lemmings occur is not invariably in winter or before weather of inclement nature, as our theory professes to maintain. It was supposed that these animals, as has already been remarked, left their native haunts through their fore-knowledge of a severe winter. But migrations have occurred in the spring, when all fear of starvation was practically at an end, and migrations have been noted also to take place after an autumn of unusual plenty. Thus the 'weather theory' and the 'starvation hypothesis' are alike unable to meet the facts of the case as presented to our notice in its full details. A third theory which endeavoured to account for the periodical exodus of these animals, was founded on Malthusian considerations, and regarded the over-population of a given district as the chief incentive to the migratory act. But so far as exact observation has proceeded, the excessive population seems to be rather the result than the cause of the migration. As if further to refute the idea of over-population and the consequent deficiency of food being the causes of the exodus, we may note the fact that during their journeys the wandering hordes of lemmings frequently light upon a land wherein plenty of food exists, but that instead of sojourning therein and satisfying their wants, they pass onwards and seawards, without a halt. Nor must the fact be overlooked, that as Pennant tells us, their march is practically one of extermination for themselves. Their ranks are devastated by every carnivorous animal, even by every bird of prey that cares to attack them. They are a timid race, and appear to be terrified by the mere shadow of a passing cloud. When they swim across Norwegian 'fjords' and lakes, the ripples caused by the summer wind drown them by hundreds. The appearance of a boat causes multitudes to turn tail and swim back to the shore; and the migratory band, which numbered its myriads on setting out upon its march, reaches the end of its journey at the sea, and appears as a miserable remnant of a once formidable host. Whatever be the causes of the migration, it is perfectly obvious that the exodus is attended with no advantage to the lemming-race. In fact, the result of the migration is practically the thinning out of the species and the destruction of countless thousands of the race—this result, however determined, being a disadvantage as far as the animals are concerned, since it is the universal law of life and nature that each species 'fights for its own hand.'

The remarkable feature of the lemmings' march however, has been seen to consist in their line of march being *straight and undeviating*. Such a notable fact attracted the early observations of naturalists; and exact accounts of the migration and descriptions of the localities through which the animals pass, shew that they exhibit no instinct in selecting an easy route, but on the contrary migrate by lines of march wherein they encounter the greatest hardships and difficulties from broad lakes, rushing torrents, and high hills or mountains. One series of careful observations on the lines of march of these animals, for instance, reveals the interesting fact that whilst the lemmings, by a slight *détour*, might have avoided a deep and rapid river and a broad lake,

they crossed both with the result of grievously thinning their ranks, besides passing over elevated ridges of land and snowy mountains where their numbers were materially lessened by the attack of their enemies. The straight line from any district to the sea is thus practically the track selected by the lemmings; some of the hordes going eastwards in Norway to the Gulf of Bothnia, and others westwards to the Atlantic. It appears to be a rare occurrence for these animals to march southwards.

The purposeless nature of the migration of these animals is nowhere better viewed than at the termination of their strange journey, when the decimated horde has arrived at the sea. There the survivors disappear from sight. Many die; a large proportion perish in the sea; some may sustain a precarious existence in a region to which they are strangers, and compared with which their native haunts were lands of plenty; but practically the exodus of the lemmings is devoid of advantage and fraught with disadvantage, danger, and ultimate death by drowning, to the species at large. How then may this strange habit be explained? The answer is, by reference to the altered character of the continent of Europe; or speaking more generally, by taking into account the physical changes to which the world at large has been subject, and which indeed it is still undergoing.

Instinct, generally preservative in its operation, is often blind, frequently too conservative in its action, and requires in any case a lengthened period of time for the inauguration of new ideas adapted to alterations in the life or surroundings of animals. The chief difference in fact between mere instinct and the educated experience of humanity, consists in the want of that power of accommodation to new or unwonted circumstances, which experience and an educated intelligence are alone calculated to impart. Bearing this idea in mind, we may regard the migratory instinct of the lemmings as presenting us with a phase of life once well and perfectly adapted to their surroundings. Let us suppose however, that in the language of the Laureate, 'where rolls the deep, there grew the tree,' and that where the North Atlantic now reigns paramount on the Norwegian coasts, there existed land; we may then understand that the migration of the lemmings was guided by the purpose of visiting such land, wherein, there is every reason to believe, may have existed a genial climate and a plentiful supply of food. On this supposition, then, we see that the lemmings at present are impelled by an unaltered instinct towards a lost tract or continent. Instinct is slow of alteration or change, as we have seen, and the lemmings are not peculiar amongst animals in retaining an instinct which once benefited the species. On such a theory also, we may learn the reason why these animals commit themselves fearlessly to the Atlantic waves, since the instinct which has led them across their native lakes and firths, will undoubtedly inspire them with the idea that across the ocean lies the ancient feeding-ground of their race—a family tradition this which, like many ideas in higher life, operates disadvantageously to its possessors. The existence of submerged land in the North Atlantic is by no means a merely theoretical supposition. The shallowness of soundings taken off the Norwegian

shores, and the presence of elevated ridges in the bosom of the Atlantic, indicate that the depression of this area may have been—geologically speaking—a recent event. But apart from these latter data, the case of the lemmings can be fully explained only on the theory that they seek an ancient haven of their race, in the form of a land which the existing world knows no longer, and which through its subsidence has disappeared in the depths of the sea.

THE FOUNDLING.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER III.—AN EASTER EGG.

So Mr Home came and went. Sometimes he would stay in Mudford a day or two, sometimes only as many hours; and as the days and weeks went by, I knew that his child had grown to love him dearly; but the perverse little thing would never *show* her love to him; she always kept up the same distant manner when he was actually with her; though when he was away she would chatter about him by the hour at a time, and never tired of pointing out how much nicer 'the papa,' as she called him, was than 'Papa Long' or 'papa at Mrs Grey's.'

And how did I feel all this time? Even I myself scarcely know; for sometimes I wished with all my heart that I had never seen either Lucy or her father; and then again, I knew not whether to rejoice most that I had found Lucy, or that Lucy's father had found her and me. For before I knew that Mr Home's little daughter looked out for his coming with a longing gladness, I was forced to own to myself that I too so looked for him; that the days he did not come were dull and gray; and that the approach of the time when his house would be ready for its little mistress was dreaded almost as much on his account as hers.

I don't mean to defend myself a bit, or to say it was anything but forward, unwomanly, what you will, to fall in love unasked; I only know the feeling came quite unsought, and at first unwelcomed; it came in spite of me, and it stayed. I thought I had tasted of a bitter cup when my little foundling was claimed away from me; when instead of feeling that she was something of my very own to love and work for, I came to know that I only held her on sufferance, that any hour of any day she may be taken away and I have no right to remonstrate. But I tasted a bitter drop still one day, when Mr Home was at our house and had as usual been prattling to Lucy about her new home. 'It will be quite ready for you little one, in three weeks more,' he had said; and then came the inevitable question: 'And have you found a very nice mamma?' But the answer was now changed, if the question was not, for he said: 'Yes; I think I have.'

'That is a very good thing,' the child said gravely. 'Are you sure she is nice?'

'Quite sure,' answered he.

'As nice as Aunt Jenny?'

'Quite as nice,' said he. And oh! how I blessed the friendly twilight, for I felt that my face had gone white and woful; and I would have died rather than let him know.

Perhaps after all he did guess something, for he

hardly spoke to me till he said good-night. 'You heard what I told the child just now, did not you?' said he.

I bowed my head for answer, for I could not speak, neither could I look up in his face.

'Will you not wish me God-speed?' said he, holding my hand in the firm yet gentle clasp that was so like him.

Then I did look up, and tried to speak; but it was no use. I could not say I was glad; I could not wish him God-speed when I knew that all the good of my life would go for ever on the day his plans were accomplished.

'Will the parting with the child be so very hard?' said he. 'I had hoped that you would be reconciled to the idea by now.'

'It will be hard—very hard,' I managed to say, for I caught at the hope that he would lay all my grief to that.

'Minna Grey says they are all going to send Easter eggs to their sister in London,' said Lucy one day about a week before Easter. 'What are Easter eggs?'

Mr Home, who had again come down on one of his short visits, explained to her about them, and asked if she would like one.

To which she was graciously pleased to say: 'Yes, if it was a very nice one.'

Easter was late that year, as late as it could be. Mr Home came to Mudford on the Saturday, intending to stay till Monday morning. I supposed it would be his last visit, for the three weeks would be over on Wednesday.

'O look, Aunt Jenny! such funny humpy parcels,' cried Lucy, eying with delight three egg-shaped parcels lying on the breakfast-table. 'There's one for me, one for you, and one for Aunt Amy, and hers is the greatest. May I open mine now, Aunt Jenny?'

Of course I said yes; and while she was busy untying knots I turned over the other two. Both addresses were in Mr Home's writing, and as Lucy had said, Amy's was much the largest.

I was still looking at them when she came in. 'Well, why don't you see what is inside?' said she, taking up a knife and cutting the string. Inside the paper was a morocco case, and inside the case a splendid bracelet and brooch; so glittering and sparkling that Lucy cried out there were sparks of fire amongst them.

'What shall you do?' said I. 'Shall you keep them?'

'Keep them! To be sure I shall,' said the practical Amy; 'if he chooses to pay us in this form, I don't see any reason against it; and I am sure I'm not going to hurt his feelings by refusing, after we have done so much for him. Now let us see what is in yours.'

In mine there was only one little ring, a costly one though, for it bore one large diamond surrounded by rubies; still it was nothing in comparison with Amy's, and somehow I could not bear to look at it, so I shut up the case and put it out of sight.

Mr Home came over from his hotel and dined with us, and Amy was voluble in her thanks; Lucy also was much more demonstrative than usual; I only, had not a word to say. After dinner Mr Home went out, saying he would 'have a walk and a smoke,' and come in later to

say good-bye; for he was going away early next morning.

'I mean to take Lucy to church this evening,' said Amy when he was gone. 'But you had better not go Janet. I know your head has been bad all day, and the heat and lights will make it worse; so you had better lie down; and perhaps it will be better by the time we come home.'

I did as she said; but there was small chance of my head being better, for when left to myself in the dark all the miserable thoughts of the night before came back thicker and darker, till presently some sharp remembrance of Lucy's love and how I should live without it, touched the rock in the right spot 'and the waters flowed,' at first hot and bitter, then more calmly, till at last they were all spent and had swept off with them much of the misery that set them going. I was lying on the sofa quite still, when some one opened the door, and thinking it was one of the maids, I said: 'I don't want the candles lighted, thank you.' The door closed gently, and I thought the maid had gone; till after a minute or two I somehow felt as that I was not alone, though I compelled myself to keep still, that the feeling might pass. But no; the feeling only increased, till I started up and faced round, to see Mr Home standing on the hearth-rug. I began some stumbling speech about Amy being home directly.

'I hope not,' said he; 'for I want to speak to you a little. Wasn't your egg worth even a thank you, Janet?'

'Yes; of course it was; it was very pretty.' I could speak bravely now I had had my cry out, and in the friendly darkness.

'Did you see it all?' he asked. 'I expect not. Will you let me have it a minute or two?'

I went to fetch it; and when I got back, he had stirred the fire into a blaze and lighted the candles.

He took the case from me and opened it. There lay the little ring in its white nest; this he lifted out, nest and all; and underneath there lay a little locket of plain gold attached to a delicate chain. 'I want you to give this to the child,' said he; 'and ask her to wear it. There is a picture inside.' 'Yours?'

'No; not mine. It is a likeness of "the new mamma." Would you like to see it?' He smiled to himself as he spoke, as if the sound of the words were pleasant to him.

So I answered out bravely: 'Yes; I should like to very much.'

He touched the spring, and the locket opened; but though my voice was clear, my eyes were dim, and I could not see clearly.

'Is it not pretty?' he exclaimed; and I answered: 'Yes; very pretty;' though for all I could see it might have been the Witch of Endor herself.

Then the smile broadened into a laugh. 'I don't believe you know whether it is a picture at all or not; but I have a larger one here;' and he opened a locket I had noticed he had always worn lately, and about which he would never satisfy Lucy's curiosity. 'Come,' said he, putting his arm round my shoulders and taking me close to him—'come close, and see clearly this time. Now, is it not pretty?'

The dimness was startled out of my eyes now,

and I saw, but surely not clearly yet, or was it that I looked into a tiny mirror?"

"Well, what do you see?"

"Why, nothing but my own face!" said I, in bewilderment.

"And who else did you expect to see?" he whispered, holding me closer still. "Who else did you think either the child or I could have for 'the new mamma'?"

Not all at once could I realise it. I stood there held in his firm clasp, afraid to move or speak, lest I should wake and find it all a dream.

"Have you no word to say to me?" he murmured presently. "It surely cannot be that you will forsake us—that I have made a mistake? For the child's sake Janet, if for nothing else, try to think favourably of my hopes."

"For the child's sake." Yes; that was it; it was for that he wanted me of course. But even so, was it not more than I had dared to hope for? Maybe so; but still—it was not as if he wanted me for my own sake.

"What is the matter?" he asked softly, feeling me shrink and shiver. "Nay, my darling, you don't think that I want you for the *child's* sake only? Why Janet, you surely don't mean to say that you have not all along seen that I love you for your own sweet sake? I thought you knew it well enough, and sometimes I feared your coolness was meant to discourage me; but you see I was not so easily discouraged. Now, look up, and tell me you will be my own darling wife and Lucy's 'nice new mamma.'"

I do not know what I said to him; I only know he seemed quite satisfied.

"Of course, I knew it all along," said the ever practical Amy. "If he hadn't fallen in love with you at first sight, he would never have left you his baby."

"Yes; that is a *very* nice new mamma," said Lucy when the locket was explained to her. "And it is just like Aunt Jenny's picture that you took out of my album."

Years have rolled on, and though there are little folks of my own, it is difficult to tell whether they or 'the Foundling' occupy the biggest place in my heart. Of this however, I am certain, that while seated in quiet talk in the garden of our lovely home by the Thames, my goodman and I often thank the blessed chance that ruled my railway journey on the 24th instead of the 23d of December 187—

THROWING OIL ON THE WATERS.

BY A SHETLANDER.

A SHORT paper in the August number of *Chambers's Journal* on 'The Use of Oil at Sea' has reminded me of an incident I witnessed many years ago in the Shetland Islands, which very forcibly corroborates the statements of the writer. I shall presently relate it, as it very strikingly illustrates the truly wonderful effects of 'throwing oil upon the troubled waters,' and will serve to shew that the saying indicates a *fact*, and is not, as is generally supposed, merely fancy. This is well known to Shetlanders, and has often been the means of saving valuable lives. But first a few notes

regarding the Shetland deep-sea fishing and fishermen may not be uninteresting to your readers.

Finer boatmen than these hardy islanders are not to be found anywhere, as will readily be acknowledged by all who may have seen the splendid manner in which they manage their fragile skiffs in a storm. The boats invariably used for what is called the 'haaf' or deep-sea fishing are remarkably small, and to look at them, seem utterly unfitted to contend against the fierce storms and raging tideways which prevail amongst and around the islands. But their safety just lies in their lightness, buoyancy, and handiness. If much larger and heavier, they would, from their unskillfulness, not be so easily managed, and would consequently be in much more danger of being engulfed in a rough sea. They are entirely without deck, and are barely capable of bringing on shore from thirty to sixty hundredweight of fish—the latter only in the case of the largest-sized boats, and when the sea is perfectly smooth. Such a quantity indeed will load them so deeply as to leave but three or four inches of free board.

On returning from a day's or a night's fishing at the haaf, the crew of six men generally haul their boat up on the beach above high-water mark, and with perfect ease. This will give an idea of the size of the Shetland fishing-boat. In form she is long and narrow and pointed, with a considerable spring both at stem and stern; in fact just the Norwegian yawl with some slight modifications and improvements. She carries a large lug-sail on the one tall and slender mast which rises straight up from amid-ships, and is firmly secured to the stem and both sides by stays.

Right out in the Atlantic or North Sea during the summer months, the hardy fishermen prosecute their arduous and dangerous calling, their only provisions being some half-baked oatmeal cakes and a small keg of 'bland'—whey made from buttermilk. Sometimes in fine settled weather they will run seaward as far as forty or fifty miles or farther, in fact out of sight of land, out on what seems a northward prolongation of the Dogger Bank, nearly half way to Norway, which is the best fishing-ground; and then they are frequently nearly two days and two nights at sea. It will readily be understood that a sudden storm occurring when the boats are thus far from the land in mid-ocean puts the fishermen in utmost peril, and in such circumstances it too often happens that some never reach the shore. Such summer gales are common enough, and although fortunately not usually of long continuance, they are often very severe while they last. Not seldom after the long stretch of lines has been 'set,' the storm suddenly bursts upon them, so that the fishermen not having time to haul them in again, are forced to leave them. At other times, about the commencement of the gale they will have recovered all or a part of them with a large quantity of fish also—mostly ling and cod—for, curiously enough, the best hauls are generally made just before a storm and when the weather is rough. The boat is then properly trimmed, and all made as snug as possible. The sail is closely reefed and hauled up. The skipper takes the helm and also the sheet, which rope is never confided to any hand but the helmsman's. He alone has thus the entire control and management of the craft—if close-

hauled or with the wind on her beam—easing her now with a turn of the helm; now by letting off a few inches of the sheet when a heavier blast than usual occurs; now luffing up and breasting a wave as it breaks close to her bows; now running from another if it looks too near and ugly and threatens to break on the quarter or beam, that it may expend itself astern, as to his experienced eye the emergency may seem to require. A quick eye, a steady hand, coolness and courage, and promptness of judgment, are all needed; for the smallest mistake, a wrong turn of the helm, the slightest false movement, might be fatal.

More frequently however, if the storm is very severe and the sea heavy, the safest course, and that generally adopted, is to run dead before the wind. In that case a duty not less important than the helmsman's falls to the next most experienced boatman. That duty is to manage the 'tows,' as the phrase goes. In one hand he holds the halliards; in the other the down-hauler. As each great wave comes rolling on, lifting the boat high on its crest, he hauls down the sail some distance, to ease her from the strain and pressure of the wind, to the full force of which she is in this elevated position exposed. Again, as she rushes down into the trough of the sea he hauls it up, to catch as much wind as possible, that she may run from the next wave rising astern ere it breaks. It is considered by the fishermen that a cool and judicious hand at the 'tows' is quite as necessary as a good helmsman.

In running to the land, the greatest danger is always encountered in crossing those tideways which rush between the islands and round most of the points and promontories, at the rate sometimes of nearly ten miles an hour. In the calmest weather, it is often impossible to cross them during the hours of full tide, and you must wait till the 'slack of the tide' before attempting it. From any commanding height on shore you can trace by their course of white foam these furious tideways running far out into the ocean, while all around the sea is perfectly smooth and placid. They are veritable rivers in the sea, and Shetlanders speak of them as 'the string of the tide,' and crossing them is called '*cutting the string*.' Of these streams or tideways, the far-famed Sumburgh Roost off the south point of the islands, and one near Burrafirth at the north point of Unst, are the strongest and most dangerous around the Shetlands.

It is when running before the wind or crossing a tideway in a storm—but seldom except when in utmost peril—that the Shetland fishermen adopt an expedient which has often saved many a boat's crew. They crush—or as they call it 'crop'—in their hands the livers of any ling or cod they may have caught, and keep throwing them astern and around them. The effect is magical. The waves are not lessened in size; but they no longer break, and it is only from their breaking close to the boat, and so being dashed in upon her and filling her, that there is danger. The rapidity with which the oil spreads over a considerable space of sea around is marvellous, and scarcely to be credited except by one who has witnessed the phenomenon. Shetlanders call the smooth appearance of the water caused by any oily substance floating on it, *loom*.

'Throwing oil upon the troubled waters' is

therefore a saying which has undoubtedly originated in a fact with which very few are acquainted, but which cannot be too widely made known. That fact is simply this, that oil prevents the waves from breaking; and unless they break, though they were twenty times as high as they ever are, there would be no danger whatever to a boat, or for the matter of that to a vessel either, except from the strain of her rolling. There would be no 'shipping' of tremendous 'seas,' of which we so often read, no poor sailors and deck cargoes swept overboard, no smashing of binnacles and bulwarks. An expedient so simple might often be of invaluable service in saving life and property. The difficulty and peril, for instance, of launching a boat from a sinking ship in a storm are mostly caused by the wind breaking the waves over the boat and filling her or dashing her to pieces against the vessel's side. The danger of such a mishap would unquestionably be greatly lessened by throwing overboard some oil, which ought always to be kept handy. Boats also going from one ship to the assistance of another in distress, and life-boats on their way to a wreck and boarding it, might often with very great advantage use a little oil, if its effects were only better known. Again, we often read of boats adrift on the sea from a foundered or burning ship, and it is marvellous how frequently they are able to weather the fiercest storms though often greatly overcrowded; but many a time they are swallowed up, when a little oil judiciously used during the worst of the storm might have been the means of saving them.

Another case in which oil might be of the greatest service is when a man accidentally falls or is washed overboard. Life-buoys are thrown into the sea, the ship is brought to as quickly as possible, boats are lowered and a search made; but before all this can be done, the vessel has run a considerable distance, and although the poor struggler in the water may be a good swimmer and able to keep afloat for some time, the great difficulty is to find the exact spot where he is to be sought for. A life-buoy or a man's head is a small object to descry amongst heaving waves and white foam. If life-buoys were constructed so as to contain a small portion of oil in a little receptacle or india-rubber bag attached to them, to be punctured with a knife before being thrown overboard, the effect would be not only to prevent the sea from breaking over the castaway, so making it easier for him to keep afloat, but would indicate to the searchers almost the exact spot where to look for him. His whereabouts would easily be discerned from the ship or boat by the *loom*.

I throw out these hints and suggestions on this very interesting subject, and I do think it would be well worth while that some experiments were made to test the effects of 'oil upon the troubled waters,' and that the results if satisfactory, as I am confident they would be, were made widely known to seafaring men. The cost would not be worth naming; and I am much mistaken if the benefit, as a means of saving valuable life and property, would not be enormous. As one who speaks not without personal knowledge, I would urge upon philanthropists and ship-owners, if this paper should come under their notice, to turn their attention to the subject.

The following incident occurred in Shetland a good number of years ago. It was a beautiful evening in midsummer. Nothing indicated a storm or any change in the settled weather which had prevailed for some time. All the fishing-boats had gone to the far haaf. Suddenly a little after midnight a fierce gale sprung up and raged with unwonted fury, increasing as the morning advanced, while the sea rose to a height most unusual at that season of the year. All the boats bore up for the land as soon as the storm broke on them; and during the early part of the day all reached the shore in safety, save one. She was known to be a good sea-boat, and was manned by a crew of the very best fishermen in the island; but as the hours crept on, and there was no appearance of her return, burning anxiety and suspense of wives, mothers, daughters, and neighbours were fast passing into the most dismal forebodings. I went out to a high promontory which overlooks a wide expanse of sea, and sentinels as it were the entrance to the landlocked bay where nestled the humble cottages of the fishermen. A crowd of distracted women, and of men scarcely less agitated, who had just themselves but narrowly escaped a watery grave—friends or neighbours of the missing ones—were gathered on the cliff, straining their eyes across the raging sea. It was a pitiful harrowing sight. Who can describe the agony expressed in the firmly clasped hands, the fixed and tearless eye of one, the bowed form, convulsively rocking a little one in her lap, of another, the moan of breaking hearts, the wail of despair of others! 'O my man, my gude kind man; I'll never see him more!' cried one. 'Faether, faether! will ye never never come back again?' exclaimed a blooming girl, whose cheek was blanched enough now. 'My boy—my Willie! O the cruel cruel sea!' moaned a poor widow whose only son was one of that boat's crew. And indeed it seemed to all of us but too probable that our worst fears would be realised. The storm continued unabated. The great waves were dashing against the rocks in angry fury, sending the spray right over us. Most of the men were sad and silent. Some of them were doing their best to keep alive the hope they too plainly did not themselves cherish. One suggested: 'They have probably run a long way to seaward, and set their lines, and have stayed perhaps rather too long in their endeavours to recover them before bearing up for the land; but no need as yet to fear the worst.' Another said: 'Perhaps they have run to some other island which they found easier of access.' Another suggested: 'They are very possibly waiting outside till the slack of the tide before attempting to cross the string.'

I turned to a fine stalwart young fisherman who had often accompanied me on fishing and seal-hunting expeditions, and whose courage and steadiness and judgment I had not seldom proved in circumstances of difficulty and danger.

'What do you think?' I whispered, as I kept sweeping the horizon with my field-glass.

'I don't know what to think,' he answered. 'She was a good boat, and they were brave men and good seamen that manned her; but that is an awful sea to fight against. God be with them!'

'Was!' 'were!' The words sent a chill to my heart. He was already speaking in the past tense of those for whom we looked and prayed. Sud-

denly he seized my arm as with a vice, while his keen gray eye, almost wild with intense but suppressed excitement, shot a glance across the waste of waters.

'There!' he said. 'I thought I saw something white like a sail, not the sea-foam. Don't speak yet, or it will kill these poor souls! Give me your glass. Yes, yes; again I see it. Look!'—he shouted aloud now—'I see her sure enough. They are coming right on, and going to cut the string too, I do believe; a bold venture, but awfully risky, for the tide is still strong.'

A few minutes more and we could all see the gallant little boat driving along before the gale, now lifted high on the crest of a huge wave, now completely out of sight in the trough of the sea. On on she came towards the string, which though it had run off its greatest strength, looked ugly enough to make the stoutest heart quail. Little more than five minutes would be sufficient to carry her across; but every one knew perfectly well that the greatest danger of all was just there in the middle of that tideway. It was the crisis of her fate. Five minutes more and she would be in safety, or never reach the shore. On on she came, now plainly in view of every one, and splendidly handled as we could see, on on, and buried her bows in the raging tide as a war-horse might charge an opposing rampart. We held our breath hard. No one moved; not a word was spoken, not a sound was heard but the rush and roar of wind and waves or the wild scream of a sea-mew overhead. A minute of intense suspense, and still she bravely battled on.

'Ha!' cried the young fisherman at my side, 'what is that they are doing? I know, I know! They are casting out the livers; I can see the loom on her track. Wisely thought of, and well done. It is their only chance in yon tideway.'

And so indeed it was. We could distinctly see the men with eager hands throwing out the crushed livers astern, to right, to left, all around, as though offering a propitiatory sacrifice to the sea-god; and the waves did not break on them then. A few minutes more, and then, amid tears of thankfulness and joy, 'Safe—safe, thank God!' burst out on every side; and soon they reached the shore, those hardy fishermen, and were welcomed in a manner much easier to conceive than describe.

The skipper had never left his post at the helm for nine long hours, during which he had fought out his brave battle for life with rare skill and nerve and endurance. And now, when he stepped on the beach and took up his little boy in his arms and kissed him, I did not think there was anything unmanly in the big tears which coursed down his brown cheek. A little afterwards I said to him: 'You have had a terrible day, and at one time we scarcely thought ever to see you again.'

'Ay, terrible indeed,' he replied; 'and we should never have reached the shore through yon raging sea and tide if it hadna been our casting out the livers—that smoothed the sea, and, wi' God's blessing, saved us.'

[The evidence conveyed by the foregoing touching story corroborates what we recently said regarding the virtue of oil in stormy weather at sea. If by the simple process of dropping oil into a tempest-tossed sea, the water is prevented from breaking, it is surely worth the while of

the Admiralty, and indeed of all who have the shipping interests at heart, to take up the subject and carry it into practical force. No ship or fishing-boat should be permitted to leave our shores without an equipment of oil.—Ed.]

DROLLERIES OF THE STAGE.

CHARLOTTE and Susan Cushman once attempted to play Romeo and Juliet at Trenton. Scenery and properties were conspicuous by their absence; and the only way they could devise for doing the balcony scene was to stretch an old-fashioned patchwork quilt in front of Juliet, one end being held by the manager, and the other by a little negro employed at the hotel. All went well until Juliet called Romeo back to ask,

And what o'clock to-morrow
Shall I send for thee?

Before 'fair Montague' could reply, a black head popped out from the side, and its proprietor ejaculated: 'Miss Cushing, my bell's ringin', and I am obliged to let my side of the house drop;' and drop it he did, and there was an end to the balcony scene.

The sisters were perhaps not quite so dumfounded as Madame Michan-Carvalho when playing in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at Marseilles. The cantatrice had ordered a restaurant-keeper to send her a basin of hot soup at nine o'clock. The hour came, and with it a girl carrying the star's refreshment. The girl made at once for the stage, and arrived at the wings as Madame was singing in the finale to the first act; and the next moment Ravenswood and Lucia were astonished by a soup-tureen being set down on the mossy bank in front of the fountain, the cover lifted, and the intruder addressing them, as she plunged a spoon in the bowl, with: 'Begging your pardon sir, for interrupting you and the lady, but here's the soup!'

On the first night of *A Crown for Love*, Anne Boleyn had no sooner uttered the words, 'Now is the crown fixed firmly on my head,' than the regal diadem set auditors and actress laughing by tumbling to the ground. An accident not so annoying to the individual most concerned as the gallery commentary upon a Dunedin Cassio's lamentation: 'O that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains!' coming in the significant shape of: 'All right, old man; drink away; you're safe!' Equally trying to the actor's serenity was the more friendly intimation from another 'god,' who seeing Macbeth cover his face with his robe and shudder convulsively after crying 'Unreal mockery, hence!' to Banquo's ghost, let him know the horrible shadow had departed by shouting: 'It's all right now, governor; he's gone!'

Actors, like other men, are apt to plume themselves upon finding favour with the ladies, and like other men, sometimes achieve embarrassing conquests. Christian Brandes in his strolling days was cast to play Leander in a primitive sort of drama in which the dialogue was left pretty much to the discretion of the players. It was settled that Hero was not to be too easily won, but to refrain from admitting her love for Leander until he had plied her hard with passionate speeches. Unluckily the Hero of the occasion was

in reality desperately smitten, and scarcely gave Leander time to protest his love, before exclaiming: 'I cannot resist you, Leander; accept my heart and hand.' Brandes was nonplussed; the fine speeches he had prepared were unsuited to the situation. While he hesitated, the enraged manager whispered Hero: 'In the fiend's name, improvise a few words and retire!' Whereupon the poor girl turned to the audience, and said: 'In the fiend's name, I improvise a few words and retire!' and tripped gaily off the stage to the shouts of the amused audience; who after all, had less reason to laugh than those who heard the Western Romeo announce: 'But soft! What light from yonder window breaks? It is the east, and Juliet has a son!' What his Juliet thought of the new reading is not recorded.

Macready travelling by coach to Bath, was much amused by a fellow-passenger whose budget of theatrical anecdotes seemed inexhaustible. By-and-by the story-teller said: 'Macready is a good actor; but he can never play without applause. He went on one night, and no notice being taken of him, he told the manager he could not get on if he was not applauded. Whereupon the manager went round and told the audience what Macready had said; and when the tragedian reappeared, they applauded him so incessantly that he was utterly disconcerted.' Not more disconcerted however, than the relater of the story, when his amused listener observed that he rather discredited that tale, since he happened himself to be Mr Macready.

Dumaine, as a pirate in *Le Fléau des Mers*, was wont to excite the wonder of the spectators by extinguishing a candle with a pistol-shot. The trick was done by placing the light on a table near a small round hole in the 'cloth' behind it, through which the prompter blew out the candle as Dumaine discharged the pistol. Actuated by jealousy or a love of mischief, a fellow-actor one night covered the hole with goldbeater's skin, and when the pirate fired and the prompter blew, the candle flared away in triumph. Dumaine drew another pistol from his belt; but before he could pull the trigger the malicious joker had torn away the skin, and by blowing through the hole made the candle go out, apparently of its own accord, while Dumaine was mentally abusing the innocent prompter for his pet point not coming off as usual.

Readiness in unforeseen emergencies is of the greatest value to manager and actor alike. A word fails the memory at an important stage of the play, or some accident occurs to mar or even put a stop to all further proceedings. On such occasions fertility of resource is of the greatest moment, and has over and over again saved the credit of all concerned. In fact the readiness of an actor or manager to turn an apparent disaster into a happy interlude is much on a par with the presence of mind that guides a skilful general to victory. This readiness was well displayed on the stage by Luguet when playing the bearer of an important despatch, on the contents of which the plot of the drama turned. By mistake the property-man gave Luguet a blank sheet of paper, which he handed to the mimic king, who not having studied the words which ought to have been written on the despatch, was in a quandary. He got out of it by handing the paper back to

the messenger, with the command: 'Read it to me, sirrah!' Luguet however, was equal to the occasion, and responded: 'Alas, sir, born of poor but honest parents, I have never learned to read.'

A travelling company performing in one of the cities out West, where dramatic entertainments were rarely seen, announced Maturin's sombre tragedy *Bertram*, the hero to be enacted by a clever but erratic player named Webb. The house was crammed. 'Where's Webb?' asked the manager. Nobody knew. Scouts were sent out, and the actor unearthed; but to get him to the theatre was beyond them. He would not go. What was to be done? Somebody suggested returning the money; but the manager was not inclined to let three hundred and fifty dollars slip through his fingers. 'We'll change the play,' said he. 'Everybody get ready for *The Review*. They don't know the difference between farce and tragedy down here; only remember to call Deputy Bull, Deputy Bertram, and we shall pull through right enough.' They played *The Review*, and the audience never discovered the alteration in the programme.

The good folks of Agen, a small French town, were not to be so easily cheated out of what they came to see. A strolling troupe, of whom young Hortense Schneider was one, announced *La Tour de Nesle* for their last performance. An overflow resulted. The actors were in high spirits and full of fun. Mademoiselle Schneider discovering an old pair of russet boots behind the scenes, put them by way of a joke into the hands of Buridan as he was going on the stage. Accepting of the awkward handful, he placed the boots on a table on the stage, and quietly went through his part; when another actor of the name of Philippe d'Aulnay took possession, and made his exit with one under each arm. In the next act, Marguerite de Bourgogne entered carrying the mysterious boots, and passed them to Gaultier d'Aulnay; he turned them over to Orsini; in short, before the curtain fell the boots, though foreign to the piece, had been borne in succession by every personage. The audience watched for their appearance, while wondering what it all meant, and applauded the players to their hearts' content. Twelve months afterwards another company set up their bills in Agen, and *La Tour de Nesle* acted everybody to the theatre; but before the first act was over there were symptoms of displeasure, which gradually increased, until the uproar was so great that the curtain fell on a half-played piece; benches were torn up, lights put out, and only the arrival of the mayor at the head of a troop of soldiers put an end to the tumult. Then the mayor turned on the poor manager, who protested his inability to understand how the riot came about. 'That is all nonsense,' returned the mayor. 'Your conduct is disgraceful. You have misled the people and mutilated a masterpiece. *Where are the boots?*'

Actors are supposed to be an unmethodical race; but they are punctual to business. To avoid keeping the stage waiting, Grimaldi once ran from Sadler's Wells to Drury Lane in his clown's costume. With the same regard for punctuality, Mr Toole having to play Jack Grinnidge in *Green Bushes* at 'the Wells,' after performing the clock-maker's boy in *Janet Pride* at the Adelphi,

executed the change from boyhood to age *en route*, and when he stepped out of the cab, found further progress barred by the driver, who demanded: 'What have you done with the kid, old un, that I took up at the "Delphy?"' and was not to be pacified until the stage-door keeper endorsed the comedian's explanation of the mystery.

During the run of *Ours* at the Prince of Wales' Theatre, Mr John Clarke, who played Hugh Calcott, used to pass his Sundays and Mondays at Brighton, returning to town by the five o'clock express. One Monday afternoon, upon arriving at the station at the usual time, he discovered that the express had been withdrawn for the winter months; and that if he wanted to be in London by half-past seven, he must pay twenty pounds for a special engine. He paid the money; and as he jumped into his solitary first-class carriage, congratulated himself that he had only lost a quarter of an hour. 'Eighteen shillings, if you please sir,' said an official. 'What for?' demanded the actor. 'By the by-laws of the Brighton Company, all occupants of a seat in a special express must pay extra fare,' was the unwelcome response. He had but half a sovereign in his purse, and had to run back to his hotel to supply the deficiency—then he was off indeed, and was smoking his cigar as Hugh Calcott on the stage of the Prince of Wales' at the proper time.

Less expensive, but much more risky was Mr Emery's railway ride from Anerley to London. He had been down at the Crystal Palace, and allowed himself plenty of time to reach the Olympic Theatre; but he had the chagrin of seeing three trains despatched while he was waiting permission to go on the platform, and of learning there would not be another for half an hour; but that if he made the best use of his legs he might catch a train at Anerley which was due at London Bridge at half-past six. He ran his hardest, darted past the porters at Anerley, and jumped into the guard's van as the train was proceeding. In went the guard after him, and having no breath left to explain, at London Bridge he gave an undertaking to appear if called upon by the Company; and jumping into a hansom, by a promise of double fare got over the distance in twenty minutes; and two minutes later was as Mr Potter, standing with his back to the fire in John Mildmay's drawing-room, in the play of *Still Waters Run Deep*. Mr Compton was not so successful in his attempt to reach the Haymarket from Epsom Downs on the Derby Day, and for the first time in his life failed his manager. It was ten o'clock before he arrived at the theatre, and *The Evil Genius*, in which he played a deaf postman, was over. He eagerly inquired what apology had been made for his non-appearance, and what piece they had substituted. 'No apology, and no change at all,' was the consoling reply; 'we cut the postman's part out altogether, and nobody missed it.' The experiment was a bold one; but not so bold as that of the Memphis manager who, upon his prima-donna sulking at the last moment, cut Alice out of *Robert le Diable*, and played the opera without its heroine!

In 1834 Macready was starring at Louth. As he was dressing one evening for Virginius, the manager came into the room with such a long face, that Macready inquired: 'Bad house?' 'Bad house, sir,' replied the dejected manager; 'there's

no one!' 'What! nobody at all?' 'Not a soul, air, except the Warden's party in the boxes.' 'What! not one person in the pit or gallery?' 'O yes; there are one or two.' 'Are there five?' 'Yes; there are five.' 'Then,' said Macready, 'go on at once; we have no right to give ourselves airs.' He adds: 'I never acted *Virginius* better in all my life.'

BREATH-GYMNASTICS.

THE importance of breathing plentifully of fresh air as an essential of health is generally admitted. Well-ventilated rooms, open-air exercise, and excursions into the country, are appreciated to some extent by all classes. But the art of breathing is very much overlooked. Being a process not depending on the will for its exercise, it is too much left to the mere call of nature. It is however, an act which can be influenced very materially by the will. Properly trained singers are taught to attend very carefully to their breathing.

When brisk muscular exercise is taken, breathing is naturally active without any special effort. But when the body is at rest or engaged in occupation requiring a confined posture, and especially when the mind is absorbed in thought, the breathing naturally becomes diminished, and the action of the lungs slow and feeble. The consequence is that the oxygenation of the blood is imperfectly carried on. Even in taking a constitutional walk the full benefit is not attained for want of thorough breathing.

As a remedy for this it has been suggested that there is room for what might be fitly termed breath-gymnastics—to draw in long and full breaths, filling the lungs full at every inspiration, and emptying them as completely as possible at every expiration, and to acquire the habit of full breathing at all times. This mode of breathing has a direct effect in supplying the largest possible amount of oxygen to the blood, and more thoroughly consuming the carbon, and so producing animal heat. It has also the very important effect of expanding the chest, and so contributing to the vigour of the system.

The breath should be inhaled by the nostrils as well as by the mouth, more especially while out of doors and in cold weather. This has partly the effect of a respirator, in so far warming the air in its passage to the delicate air-cells, and in also rendering one less liable to catch cold.

This full respiration is of so much importance, that no proper substitute is to be found for it in shorter though more rapid breathing. In short breathing a large portion of the air-cells remains nearly stationary, the upper portion of the lungs only being engaged in receiving and discharging a small portion of air.

Profound thought, intense grief, and other similar mental manifestations, have a depressing effect on respiration. The blood unduly accumulates in the brain, and the circulation in both heart and lungs becomes diminished, unless indeed there be feverishness present. An occasional long breath or deep-drawn sigh is the natural relief in such a case, Nature making an effort to provide a remedy. This hint should be acted on and followed up. Brisk muscular exercise in the open air even during inclement weather, is an excellent antidote of a physical kind for a 'rooted

sorrow.' And the earnest student instead of tying himself continuously to his desk, might imitate a friend of the writer of this who studied and wrote while on his legs. Pacing his room, clad in hand with paper attached, he stopped as occasion required to pen a sentence or a paragraph.

Breathing is the first and last act of man, and is of the most vital necessity all through life. Persons with full broad deep chests naturally breathe freely and slowly, and large nostrils generally accompany large chests. Such persons rarely take cold, and when they do they throw it off easily. The opposite build of chest is more predisposed to lung disease. The pallid complexion and conspicuous blue veins shew that oxygen is wanted, and that every means should be used to obtain it. Deep breathing also promotes perspiration, by increasing the circulation and the animal warmth. Waste is more rapidly repaired, and the skin is put in requisition to remove the used materials. Many forms of disease may be thus prevented, and more vigorous health enjoyed.

LINES SUGGESTED BY HORACE, BK. I. ODE IX.

I.

SEE now the sullen vapours rest
On hoary Arthur's* silvered crest;
See trees with branches drooping low,
Look spectral in their garb of snow.
The thrush and blackbird cease to trill
Their cheerful roundelay;
And Esk's sweet melody is still;
Ice-fettered, now no more at will
Her jocund waters stray.

II.

Come, pile the fagots on the hearth!
Though nipping frosts bind fast the earth,
The crackling fire, with ruddy glow,
Shall stir our blood to genial flow.
Bring pipe and bowl, and music bring
To cheer us. Raise the song!
With wassail mirth the chorus sing,
Till wit and laughter answering,
The merry peal prolong.

III.

Count every hour a boon, and live
So long as Fortune deigns to give;
Let not the distant strife dismay,
Nor ills that are not thine to-day.
The wishing glance, the warm embrace—
Love's tender courtesies—are thine;
And thine with youthful step and grace
The dance's merry maze to trace,
Where god-like graces shine.

IV.

When night repeats the trysting hour,
Return thee to the secret bower,
Where—till her silvery laugh reveals—
The shade of some sly nook conceals
The panting maid. Clasp to thy breast,
Thou fain wilt snatch the errant tress,
She, half permitting, half distrust,
The token yield, and thou, twice blest,
Sweet thanks on blushing lips impress.

J. M. D.

* Arthur's Seat, a picturesque hill in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh.

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